

what you're given, what you live in

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by [Flamin_homosexual](#)

Summary

Hannigram fantasy AU where Will was locked away in a tower and Hannibal accidentally stumbled upon it while on the run.

Notes

for this fic there is no age gap (which i've seen a lot of in hannigram fics for some reason? like there's a LOT of unnecessary age gaps but you do you). will is around 19/20, hannibal around 21/22. this is my first time writing for the hannibal fandom so pls be kind it's hard to write about these guys when you don't know about greek mythology. also woah it's been a while since i've posted anything (so sorry to the marvel fans who've read my past stuff, idk if this is for y'all) i've been talking too much but yeah!! i hope you enjoy.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Chapter 1

Will had lived his entire life surrounded by the same four walls. He had never touched the grass that painted the ground or felt the cool rush of river water against his skin. His tower was all he knew. He had learned to occupy himself over the nearly twenty years he'd been there. Reading, learning languages, and befriending the birds and reptiles who found comfort in his presence. He made complex statues, invented his own sports, and taught himself how to paint.

Will knew that there was a world outside of his tower. He knew of religion and culture. But it was as foreign and out of reach as the stars that paint the sky. Jack had told him that he could never leave, that it wasn't safe for him outside of the stone walls. Will believed him.

As a child, Will was curious. He wanted to know everything. He was full of questions, each more abstract than the last.

"Where do we go when we die?"

"How do I know if I'm awake?"

"Where do the voices go when I can't hear them?"

But the one question that always filled his mouth was:

"When can I go outside?"

Will had known Jack his entire life, but he knew he wasn't his father. Will had asked, many years ago, what happened to his real parents. Jack had sat him down and told him that it wasn't safe for Will to live with other people or be around *normal* people. Will didn't entirely know what Jack meant, but it was the only answer he would ever get.

Will's sole interactions were with Jack and the occasional animal. Will was always told that he wasn't normal, but what did normal mean? Will knew he made the other man

uncomfortable. He spent a long time documenting the little things. Jack didn't like when Will stared at him and knew what he was thinking. Jack didn't like when Will spoke to himself, when his eyes were closed and only Will could see the pictures his mind painted. Will had grown to believe that *Jack* was the one who wasn't normal.

Will was often left alone. Jack would leave for hours or days at a time, with no mention as to when he would return. Will didn't mind. He preferred solitude—to be alone with his thoughts. He was safe on his own. Free from the worried glances Jack thought he hid well. Will was at peace when he was alone.

Will woke to a strange sound. Scratching, grunting, and panting. Will rose from his bed to investigate. He lit a lamp and carried it with him. He located the source of the sounds. They were coming from outside his tower. *Right* outside his tower.

There was no clear entry or exit in the tower. Will never saw how Jack left or returned, so he never paid any mind to it. There was a large opening on the east face of the tower, large enough for Will to comfortably lean out of but not so large that he could stand his full height on the ledge.

Will stood near the ledge, much too scared to go any closer and look outside. The only light came from the moon and his lamp. The sounds got louder and clearer. Will heard a voice. It wasn't in any language he knew, but it was definitely a person. And that person was definitely climbing his tower. He heard muttered curses and blasphemies, now in a language he knew. A dark shadow painted the opening. A tall figure fell through the archway and onto the floor. It was a man.

The man stood after a few moments, completely unaware of Will's presence. The stranger was like nothing Will had ever seen before, in books and paintings. He was tall and broad, his face sharp and angled. His chest heaved, and his hands were covered in blood and bruises. The man, still oblivious to the fact that he wasn't alone, reached into the satchel that clung to his side. Will didn't wait to see what was inside; instead, he reached for the nearest heavyweight object (a Bible, as it turned out) and thwacked the stranger in the back of the head with all his might. He fell to the ground once more.

Hannibal Lecter was somewhat infamous. A famed criminal, in fact. His face was plastered on every surface, wanted posters that boasted a high reward. Hannibal could pay double the reward with the coins in his pocket. He was most well known for his elaborate heists. Acts that, according to some, were acts of God.

His latest plot had gone somewhat awry. His current partners in crime, a local bard and his dim-witted friend, had decided that, instead of following the plan that Hannibal had spent months working on, they would much rather go off course and steal whatever they could get their hands on. This had alerted the guards on duty and thus led to the trio being chased after by half of the kingdom.

Hannibal was faster, stronger, and smarter than his co-conspirators. This was a well-known fact. However, he couldn't simply abandon them like he has done with so many of their predecessors. This was because Hannibal didn't have any of the stolen items with him. Franklyn did. The sad excuse for a man could barely outrun the mob that was following them, despite the fact that they had a head start.

They had reached a clearing and came face-to-face with a small cliff. The bard, Tobias, immediately attempted to scale the cliff face. To no one's surprise, he fell instantly. Hannibal awaited Franklyn's arrival before he shared his new plan.

"I shall climb up first, ensuring that it is stable and safe. I will then assist the two of you. We should be out of sight by the time the guards come for us."

"No offence, Lecter, but how do we know you won't just run off and leave us to the wolves?" Tobias asked, his voice thick with distrust.

"Tobias, my friend, give Mister Lecter some credibility. He made it clear that we are all vital to his plan. He needs us just as much as we need him," Franklyn replied, unaware that his input was unnecessary. Tobias was all bark, no bite. Hannibal simply smiled and brushed the dirt off of his chest.

"Franklyn is right. Where would I be without you both?"

Tobias seemed to be pursued enough to nod slightly.

"Alright then. You first, then myself, then Franklyn," Tobias decided.

"Why must I go last?" Franklyn said with a pout. Hannibal fought the urge to roll his eyes.

"It is simply a formality, Franklyn. Now, would you be so kind as to pass me your satchel? It is not easy to climb while wearing one, and since I am the most experienced one here, it would be in our best interest if I were to carry it for the time being." Hannibal held out his hand, awaiting the bag. Before Tobias could argue, clearly seeing that it was a bad idea to give Hannibal the bag that stored the jewels, Franklyn tossed the bag into Hannibal's waiting arms. Hannibal smiled. Franklyn was so eager to please Hannibal that it clouded his own judgement.

Tobias gave Hannibal a boost, holding his leg far tighter than necessary. Hannibal hauled himself over the rock ledge with a huff. He rolled onto his back and clutched the satchel to his chest. He lifted the flap to gaze upon the crown jewels, enchanted by their beauty.

"We're waiting!" Tobias scolded. Hannibal peered over the edge with a sharp smile.

"So sorry, boys, but it seems you have fulfilled your purposes. Good day!" Hannibal stood and spirited away, laughing at the anguished sounds of his now-former acquaintances.

It was nightfall by the time Hannibal was sure that no one was following him. He set up camp in a small clearing next to a river. He washed the mud and blood off of his body before lying back against a fallen tree. Under the tree was a piece of parchment. Hannibal picked it up to see that it was another wanted poster with his face on it. He scoffed. They could never get the nose right.

Hannibal woke before the sun, deciding it would be best to explore under the moon before the guards made their rounds in the morning. He had never explored this part of the forest before, having no need to leave the kingdom aside from now. He wandered for several hours before he stumbled across an isolated tower, seemingly uninhabited.

Hannibal craned his neck up at the tower, gazing at its endless height. Considering its isolation, Hannibal decided it would be best to camp out inside rather than in the forest. He quickly found purchase on the protruding bricks and made quick work of climbing the tower.

Once he finally found an entrance, he collapsed on the floor, panting and clutching his chest out of exhaustion. He then stood and reached for his satchel, making sure everything was

intact. Then it all went black.

The first thing that Hannibal could sense was the pounding in the back of his head. A throbbing, hot pain. When he opened his eyes, he saw that he was in an unfamiliar place. He was in a chair, with a rope keeping him in place. Panic set in. Had the guards found him? Or had Franklyn and Tobias sought revenge? Hannibal went to yell but found that he was gagged. He tried mapping his surroundings, but with restricted movement, he could only see shadows. His head fell forward, and he passed out once more.

When Hannibal woke for the second time, his surroundings were different. Sunlight filled the room, making it look as if the walls were painted yellow. He looked to his left and saw a figure. The figure approached, walking towards Hannibal as if he were an injured animal. They crouched down in front of Hannibal, following his gaze with their head.

The person in front of him (a young man, by the looks of it) was unlike anyone Hannibal had ever seen. He had long brown curls, a strong jaw, yet equally soft features. Light eyes, which looked right through Hannibal's soul. Whoever he was, he was beautiful.

A hand came into Hannibal's line of vision, reaching out slowly.

"I'm going to take this out of your mouth now, okay? I won't hurt you if you don't hurt me."

Hannibal nodded, enchanted by the voice above him. The gag was united and pulled away from his mouth. Hannibal's jaw clicked, and his mouth felt dry. As if his captor could read his mind, a cup of water was presented.

"Here, drink."

Hannibal looked at him sceptically.

"It's not poisoned."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow, not trusting his voice.

"Trust me," he laughed, "I'll drink some." He took a sip and smiled. "Y'see? It's fine."

Hannibal parted his lips and accepted the water, savouring the cool rush as it passed down his throat.

"I'm Will, by the way."

"Hannibal," he grunted in response.

"It's nice to meet you, Hannibal."

When Will first hit the man over the head, he began to panic. He didn't know when Jack would be back and how he would react. Would Will be in trouble? Would Jack kill the man? Or would he just make Will forget?

He didn't have time to spiral. Jack wasn't there, but the stranger was. Will went to a cupboard and found some rope and a rag. He pulled a chair into the centre of the main room and brought the man to sit on it. With quick movements, Will tied him in place, tugging on the rope to make sure it was secure. Once Will was happy with his work, he pressed the rag between the man's lips and tied it off around the back of his head. Will then stood back and admired his work. Pride swelled in his chest at the sight of the bound man.

Due to the unconscious state of the man in front of him, Will was able to inspect him. He ran his fingers over the scabs and scars of the stranger's hands, mesmerised by the alien structure of them. He catalogued the discoloured flesh which blossomed along his skin. The man was, for lack of a better word, beautiful.

Once the man (Hannibal, as he had found out) was fully awake, Will began his questioning. He sat opposite Hannibal on a stool, mindlessly whittling at a piece of wood while he spoke.

"What are you doing here? No one has ever found my tower before."

"I stumbled upon it," he said with a thick accent. "I was exploring the forest and saw the tower. I thought it would be a good place to spend the night. Evidently, I was wrong."

Will stared into Hannibal's eyes, reading his every micro-expression. He was lying. Will smiled and leaned forward, his whittling long forgotten. His breath tickled Hannibal's ear as he whispered, "I don't believe you."

Hannibal was taken aback. No one had ever been able to tell when he was lying. Hannibal could get away with almost anything. He huffed out a laugh.

"And why would I lie about something as trivial as taking a walk in the woods? What do I have to hide, dear Will?" Hannibal flashed a charming smile. The other man didn't reply. He simply looked at Hannibal, considering something.

"Things don't often go wrong for you. Everything always goes according to plan," he stood up and started to circle Hannibal. "You charm, lie, and steal, and it always works out for you. Well. Almost always. But something went wrong, didn't it? Someone didn't listen to instructions. Who could it have been? Not a friend; no, you don't do friends. Friends require a certain level of honesty and authenticity. Whoever disobeyed you, they didn't know you. Not well enough to know that disobedience comes with a punishment. I looked inside your satchel. Interesting trinkets you've got in there. You're a thief, I presume?"

Hannibal swallowed his anxieties and kept quiet. Will was unlike anyone he had ever met. Strange and mystic, a creature who has yet to unlock their full potential. At that moment, Hannibal knew he would become obsessed.

"What a cunning boy you are. May I ask how you acquired that knowledge? Whatever the Royal Guard has paid you, I assure you that I can double it."

"The who?" Will asked.

"The Royal Guard? The gentlemen who I am sure gave you the information you just shared with me."

"I don't know who you are talking about. As I said, no one else has ever found this tower. Aside from Jack, you're the only other person whom I have spoken to."

Hannibal was taken aback. He was sure that the man in front of him was lying but...but he wasn't. There were no signs of dishonesty. Nothing Will said was untrue.

“How did you know all of that?” Hannibal asked, trying his best to hide the sound of childlike wonder from his voice. Will simply shrugged.

“I just did. I looked at you and I saw your mind and your soul, and it spoke to me. An educated guess, one could say.”

“Incredibly educated. May I ask another question?”

“You may.”

“Why are you here? You’ve made it clear that you have lived a life of isolation, but why?”
Why would you hide your beauty from the world?

“This is the only life I have ever known. All of my memories take place within these walls. I did not choose this life by choice, but no one does. No one chooses the life that the Lord hands them, but it is up to us to feed and nurture it into something uniquely ours. I am sure that you did not choose a life of dishonesty, yet you have moulded and crafted it into an art form that only you have perfected.”

Will was now standing in front of Hannibal, his body cast in light as if he were a divine object, not meant for the eyes of mere mortals.

“It’s my turn to ask a question now,” Will stated. He grabbed what appeared to be a knife and stood behind Hannibal, crouching low and out of sight. Hannibal took a deep breath in, anticipating the worst.

“Will you take me away from here?”

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Backstory from Jack's point of view, and some more conversation between Will and Hannibal.

Chapter Notes

some brief warnings for this chapter: there is a very brief mention of postpartum depression (other wise known as the baby blues) as well as descriptions of a mutilated animal (Will didn't kill the animal but it's still pretty nasty). if either of those topics cause distress or make you uncomfortable stop reading at "The Queen did not take kindly to her new child" and start again at "Jack took Will back to the palace and had him bathed."

I'll try my best to add chapter specific warnings as they come up, but as we get further into the story there will definitely be canon typical violence. thank you so much and enjoy.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Jack liked to think that he was a good man. He followed rules, listened to those who needed help, and was honest. He was close with the King and Queen of the land. They trusted him endlessly and shared their deepest secrets with him.

When the Queen fell ill during her pregnancy, Jack led the Royal Guard in finding a cure. They worked tirelessly, day and night, scouring the ancient texts and consulting with wise men. Finally, one faithful March morning, they found it. A rare flower said to cure any ailment. Jack was the first to see it, drawn to its rotting smell. He and the Royal Guards spent hours carefully extracting the flower. The smell was putrid, and many of the men needed to back away to save themselves from regurgitation.

The flower stood several feet tall, its presence striking dread in all who gazed upon it. Its insides were crimson, the colour of fresh blood.

Once they returned to the Kingdom, the finest healers in the land were tasked with creating a remedy for the Queen. They extracted samples from the flower and formed a broth for the Queen. Jack was the one to administer the medicinal soup, as per the Queen's request.

The Queen recovered quickly, and Jack was awarded a commendation for his efforts. Everything was perfect.

The Prince was born, and the Kingdom broke out in celebration. He was a gorgeous thing, with deep blue eyes and a thick mop of hair on his head. He had a strong grip and almost never cried. Many would think that he was perfect. However, there was something different.

Jack was one of the first to notice. While Jack had no children of his own, he still cared for them. He knew enough about children to know that this one was different. Even as an infant, Prince William (or simply Will, as the child would only respond to the shortened name) would make those around him uncomfortable. The child's icy glares and silent rage were enough to make a grown man feel as if something were wrong.

The Queen did not take kindly to her new child, and Jack grew concerned. Tensions were high inside of the Palace, and all eyes fell on the Prince as the cause. Her Majesty couldn't bear to be near the child; she was only willing to see him for his feedings and no more. Jack took on a parental role in Will's infancy.

One day, not too long after the Prince had turned three, something happened. Jack had found the boy sitting on the ground in the Royal gardens, covered in blood. Instantly, Jack ran over to him and checked for any injuries before he came to a terrifying conclusion. It wasn't Will's blood.

There was a dead animal next to Will. It was so mangled that Jack couldn't tell what it was. Perhaps a rabbit who should have hopped faster. Upon closer inspection, Jack saw that the poor animal had been cut open.

"Will," he questioned softly, "did you hurt this animal?" The boy looked up, eyes full of life, and shook his head.

"Was dead when I found it," the young boy replied.

"Did it look like this when you found it?" Jack asked slowly as he gestured to the mess on the grass. Will shook his head again.

"Wanted to see what was inside. Was curious."

Jack took Will back to the palace and had him bathed. He made the choice to tell the King and Queen, deeming it best to let them know that there was something wrong with their child.

That was a mistake.

The Queen was in hysterics, while the King was frozen in shock. Jack felt ashamed for causing such distress.

"Your Majesty, if I may-" Jack began.

"You may not," the Queen snapped. She huffed and pressed her face into her hands. "What did I do to deserve such a child?" She laughed. It was wet and bitter. "Perhaps I am simply an awful mother, and this is my punishment."

"I can assure you, Your Majesty, that you are not an awful mother; you have done everything in your power to provide for the Prince," Jack replied. The King offered no words of comfort, his stony eyes set on the wall.

"I refuse to be associated with such a vile, corrupted creature!" she spat. "What if he grows to despise me? What if I meet the same fate as that poor animal?"

Jack tried his best to comfort the Queen, but to no avail. He was torn between helping Will or helping the family. The decision he came to was the only one that could help them all.

Under the cover of night, Jack held the sleeping child in a warm embrace and took him away from the palace. He vowed that he would raise him to be a normal, happy child.

"Will you take me away from here?"

Will didn't realise what he had said until the words were already hanging in the air. What was he doing? He didn't know this man; he didn't know what would happen if—no, not if, but *when* Jack found out.

"I'm sorry?" Hannibal asked. Will didn't respond, opting to cut the rope that bound Hannibal's wrists instead. Will huffed.

"I'd like to leave, and I'd like you to take me."

"And what would I get out of that?" Hannibal seemed sceptical.

"Well, firstly, you'd get your stolen goods back-" Hannibal made a sound of protest, "and I *know* they are stolen. And secondly, if you take me away from here," Will leaned in close and dropped Hannibal's now freed wrists, "I won't leave you to rot." Will stood once more in front of Hannibal. He glared down at the semi-bound man and cocked his head.

"What will it be?"

Will watched as Hannibal swallowed and deliberated his answer. Will himself wasn't quite sure what came over him to think such a violent thing.

"Well, it seems that I do not have much choice in the matter." Hannibal sounded defeated, but Will could tell that it was all an act. Will beamed.

"I best get ready then."

When Hannibal first heard Will's question, he thought that it was surely a joke. Hannibal found it hard to believe that he was the first to find this tower, and even more strange that Will had been so quick to trust him.

Hannibal soothed the redness of his wrists, rubbing them gently to try and relieve the markings left by the rope. He was still bound by the waist and legs, but his hands were more than enough to break free if he needed to. He watched as Will hurried around the room, muttering to himself as he stuffed a small bag with spare garments and supplies.

"You seem surprisingly prepared for a man who has never stepped foot outside," Hannibal said, his neck craned at an awkward angle to meet the other man's eyes. Will stopped suddenly in his tracks and stared at Hannibal. His eye contact burned like the embers of a long-forgotten fire, full of life with nowhere to go.

"While I have never made any attempts to run away, I have fantasised. I have devised plans in my head and practised. One must always be prepared for whatever may occur."

Hannibal hummed in agreement.

"Would it be too much to ask to be set free from these bindings? I believe that it has been established that I have no plans to harm you, dear Will."

"Oh yeah, of course. Just a moment," Will replied, briskly making his way over to Hannibal.

"Don't squirm; I wouldn't want to nick you." Light reflected off of the blade's edge as Will sliced through the rope. It broke away as if it were nothing more than a blade of grass. Hannibal could feel the strength that Will hid, and he found it beautiful.

Once Hannibal was free, he decided to explore the tower. It really was wonderful. Abstract paintings covered the walls, depicting the circle of life and the beauty of the night sky. Vast tapestries lay unfinished on the floor, stories that would never come to an end. Hannibal found an extensive library with books in tens of languages.

"Do you speak all of these?" he asked, flipping through what seemed to be a medical journal.

"All of these, what?" Will replied, his disembodied voice carrying through the rooms.

"All of these languages. There are some that even I don't recognise," Hannibal huffed out in surprise.

"Is that meant to impress me?" Will appeared carrying a plate of cheeses and fruit. He handed it to Hannibal. "But to answer your question, no, I don't speak all of these languages. But I can read them, and what I lack in fluency, I make up for in common sense. A language is just context at its core, is it not?"

Hannibal accepted the plate with grace, carefully examining each piece of food before eating it.

"I believe language is derived from emotion," Hannibal said in between bites. "Each language has words that cannot be translated perfectly into another, but one can describe them with hand gestures and sounds, and they are understood. It is comedic to me how we go to our primitive roots to explain something as complex as language."

Once the plate was cleared and put away, Hannibal noticed that Will's gaze continuously fell upon him. He understood, of course. The young man had done a very good job of covering up his nerves, but Hannibal believed that the gravity of their situation had finally weighed down on him.

"Are you alright, Will?" Hannibal asked. He noticed that Will had been staring at one of the paintings, although he wasn't looking at it. His eyes were glazed over, and his head was completely still. His hands twitched every so often at his sides. Hannibal watched Will come back to himself, as if he had just woken up from an odd dream.

"Hm? Oh yeah, I'm okay. Just... nervous, you could say."

"I can imagine. What you are doing is incredibly impulsive. Are you sure that you want to go through with it?"

"Of course I am sure!" Will snapped. "Sorry. I shouldn't have yelled. It has all just come crashing down that I am finally going to leave my tower. I am sure of my decision, however."

"Let us go then. The world awaits."

Chapter End Notes

in case anyone was wondering, the flower mentioned is based off of the corpse flower (Titan arum). i thought it would be fun to use the flower as a replacement for the one

used in Tangled, and (in my mind at least) adds to Will's interest in the macabre. my research was only a few quick google searches so take everything i said with a grain of salt.

i hope you enjoyed this chapter and i'll see y'all in the next one!

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Will leaves the tower, and learns more about his new acquaintance.

Chapter Notes

this took longer than i would have liked to write but i was really fighting this chapter and my ideas weren't sticking if that makes sense. sorry if it feels rushed (thats because it is) but i want to get as much done before school becomes more demanding. hope you enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Will watched curiously as Hannibal tied a rope around his waist. He watched as Hannibal's hands disappeared around his thighs as the rope tightened. Hannibal held out the longest part and pulled it away from Will.

"I need you to lean all of your weight back. Let me know if any of the rope feels loose," Hannibal said. Will nodded and did as instructed, allowing himself to fall backwards. Hannibal kept a firm grip on the rope and tugged slightly.

"All good?" he asked.

"All good," Will confirmed.

"Perfect. Well, let's not waste any more time. Do you remember what to do?"

Will nodded with a smile. Hannibal had gone over the concert of 'abseiling' for almost an hour.

Growing up, Will spent much of his time gazing at the outside world. He would often sit on the ledge and stare downward. There were many times when Will considered leaping out of the window. Not to kill himself, but to feel the wind in his hair and to soar like the birds he watched for hours at a time.

Will crouched on the ledge and fought the urge to look down. Hannibal told him it was dangerous to panic when so high up. Will held onto the rope in front of him and looked up at Hannibal, who seemed nervous.

"Scared that I might fall?" Will asked.

"Not at all. I am just thinking of our journey ahead."

Will went over the steps he had to take several times with Hannibal before he finally pushed himself off the ledge. For the first second, Will felt like he was flying, and a sense of weightlessness overtook him. But only for a second. Then gravity took hold, and he fell several feet. Before panic could set in, however, he was quickly stilled by Hannibal, who was handling the rope above. Will firmly planted his feet on the side of the tower and gripped the rope in his hands until his knuckles were white.

"We must work in perfect unison," Hannibal called from above the ledge. "I will feed you rope as you make your way down, understood?" Will nodded and swallowed harshly, his mouth dry.

The process wasn't as bad as it first seemed. It took Will a few attempts before he could comfortably make his way down, but after that, it was smooth sailing. After several minutes of clinging onto the rope and slowly walking down, Will felt the brush of plants against his back. Ever so slowly, he lowered his legs until they were straight, and he carefully landed on the grass. It was euphoric. The grass was green and fresh, covered in dew, and beautiful. Will removed his shoes instantly so that he could feel the blades tickle his feet. He laughed at the feeling and was almost overwhelmed with joy. Will was so caught up in his own happiness that he didn't notice that Hannibal had already descended and stood next to him.

"Well, I am glad to say that our little escape went perfectly. Now-" Hannibal was cut off by Will hugging him. Will clung to the other man and shook with raw emotion.

"Thank you," Will mumbled against Hannibal's shoulder. Will felt Hannibal pat his back in an attempt to comfort him.

"It is no problem at all," Hannibal assured. Will backed away and cleared his throat. His eyes stung with the threat of tears. He was overcome with emotion. Strange feelings that he had never felt before suddenly swallowed his body whole. It was all very overwhelming.

Once Will had gotten over the initial shock of it all, he took the time to admire the scenery around him. He was surrounded by vibrant flowers, lively insects, and tall plants. It was all so alien. Will felt Hannibal's eyes on his back the entire time, the other man seemingly as interested in Will as Will was in nature.

“Come now, Will,” Hannibal said. “We must make our way towards the Kingdom, if you wish to see civilization.” Will simply nodded, his mouth unable to form words. Hannibal didn’t take any note of it, and led the way.

Once the sun was hanging high in the sky, Hannibal suggested that they take a rest at a nearby river. Will agreed, wanting to feel the rush of water against his skin. The pair deposited their belongings underneath the shade of a tree and made their way to the river. Will removed his shoes and rolled up the legs of his trousers and hesitantly stepped into the water. He yelped in surprise, the coldness of the river a pleasant shock. He heard Hannibal chuckle as he approached Will.

“Well, I do hope that the real world is everything you hoped it would be, dear Will.” Hannibal crouched down and picked up a pebble. He inspected it thoroughly before throwing it. It bounced off of the top of the water several times before sinking.

“How did you do that? Will asked in awe.

“Magic,” Hannibal deadpanned. Will rolled his eyes and copied Hannibal’s previous motions; he picked up a similar looking stone and threw it the exact same way. It went further than Hannibal’s.

“Beginners luck,” the other man muttered, a slight scowl on his face.

They sat beneath a tree and basked in the early afternoon sunlight, snacking on various berries which Hannibal had found. Will craved to learn more about his new companion, curious about his past and his future.

“I have a question,” Will said, turning to Hannibal.

“Ask away.”

“That night, when you were climbing my tower, I heard you speaking. It was a language I did not recognise.”

“And your question is?”

“Well, where did you come from? Your accent sounds entirely different than Jack’s and my own, so I assume you are not from this Kingdom.”

“You assumed correctly, Will,” Hannibal said, sitting up straighter against the tree. “I am from Lietuva, a Kingdom in the east.”

“What is it like there?”

“It’s beautiful. There are rolling mountains covered with lush greenery as far as the eye can see. During the winter months the country is covered in thick snow, as if the Lord lay a

blanket on us.” Hannibal spoke with stars in his eyes and a slight hitch in his breath. Will gazed at him, feeling Hannibal’s emotions within his own bones. Will shifted so that they were eye level.

“It has been years since you have been there, has it not?” Will asked.

“I left when I was young. I was barely even a man.” Will could see the sadness in his eyes, memories of a past life all rushing back.

“Why did you leave?” Will asked softly. Hannibal took a deep, shuddering breath.

“I had no choice. You were right, by the way. I never would have chosen a life of crime. But again, I had no choice. My family was incredibly wealthy, I was a Count, in fact, and my sister the Countess. My parents were loved by all, but they had their enemies.” Hannibal’s eye lashes were damp, but he continued. “One night in the dead of winter, we had some... unwanted guests. To this day I do not know who they were. All I remember was our mother telling my sister and I to run, to get away, to find safety. We were not fast enough. My sister could not bear to leave our mother and father, despite what I told her. I had to forcibly drag her to safety. She did not understand, she was too young.” Hannibal paused and his chest heaved. Will simply observed, enchanted by the tears that stained his face.

“We were found, of course. At that age it was practically impossible to be silent for long. They...they kept us. There are times when I wish they didn’t. I wish that we were put out of our misery all together. But no, that is not how the Lord intended. We were kept in the dungeon of our estate, a place we were strictly forbidden to enter while our parents were alive. It was unholy. My sister and I were the lone inhabitants, save for a snail colony which thrived in the dark and the damp. I do not know how long we were kept down there, but it was long enough that our estate's food supply had dwindled, and my sister and I were no longer fed. After that, I was alone.” Hannibal turned to face Will, his face red with tears. Will felt a pang of guilt in his gut for asking Hannibal to open up like this. Will reached up and wiped a tear away from Hannibal’s cheek. His skin was warm and coarse with stubble. He was beautiful.

Chapter End Notes

as always thank you so much for reading, i do have plans for this fic but it's going to take a while to get there so bear with me while we wait. comments are always appreciated and hopefully i get the next chapter out soon. have a great day/night <3

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Will meets Hannibal's friend.

Chapter Notes

hello all! sorry for the slightly shorter chapter but i wanted to post it before i left it too long. i've been busy with school and work but i'm working my hardest to write these chapters!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Will and Hannibal slept under the stars. Hannibal named the constellations while Will memorised them. Will had tried teaching himself the names of the stars but, due to the limited view from his tower, was unable to make out anything substantial.

When morning came, Will was raring to go. He woke with the sun and the birds, and he bathed in the river, all while Hannibal was still asleep. It wasn't until Will had been awake for many hours that Hannibal finally rose from his slumber.

"Where are we going today?" Will asked as Hannibal stood up.

"We should be nearing the edge of the Kingdom; however, there is a stop I must make first. It should not take long, and it would be an opportunity for you to meet more people."

"And where are we stopping?"

'The Snuggly Duckling', the sign read. Will had followed Hannibal through the woods to find a pathway, which led to a strange-looking building. Will looked towards Hannibal for some explanation as to why they were there, but the other man paid no mind to Will's glances and continued on.

"A word of warning before we go in," Hannibal said, "the people here are less civilised than you and I. However, they mean no harm." Will nodded and stood close behind Hannibal as he opened the door.

Inside, there were dozens of people. It was loud, louder than anything Will had ever heard in his life. Untuned piano blared from inside, alongside drunken singing. He was hit with a wall of heat and immediately felt overwhelmed. Before he had even entered, strange looks were cast his way. There were men who looked as if they belonged in a book on Norse mythology. Hannibal guided Will inside without a care in the world.

As they made their way inside, a young woman made herself known and rushed towards Hannibal with open arms. Will watched, utterly perplexed, as Hannibal greeted her in a similar way. This young woman (she must have been a handful of years younger than Will) ran into Hannibal's arms and hugged him as if she had not seen him in years. After the hug was shared, they exchanged quick, barely-there kisses on the cheek. Will took a moment to observe the new stranger. She was fair and lean, delicate like a flower. She had long, dark hair that reached her waist. She wore clothes unlike anything Will had ever seen before. Her shirt was an amalgamation of various fabrics and colours; there was no rhyme or reason behind them. Her legs were covered in black fabric; every other inch of it was stained a different shade. Her neck was covered by a scarf, despite the almost unbearable heat inside the building.

"Hannibal! I didn't think that you would come back," she said, a smile plastered on her face.

"Why ever would you think that? You know very well that I would be utterly lost without you, Abigail." Hannibal was smiling; his eyes were bright, and his teeth were on display. Will found himself uncontrollably attracted to the idea of Hannibal's teeth. He imagined them sinking into pale flesh and drawing blood. He imagined them being stained red. He imagined-

"Who's your friend?" Abigail asked, suddenly aware of Will's presence. Will blinked when he felt Hannibal clap a hand on his shoulder.

"This is Will," Hannibal said with pride. "He has been travelling alongside me since my escape from the Royal Guard. He was even kind enough to give me shelter for a night." Will looked up at Hannibal. It was so interesting to witness his half-truths from a different point of view. Nothing he said was necessarily false, but it led any suspicions about Will's background awry.

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Will," Abigail said as she put out her hand. "Any friend of Hannibal is a friend of mine." Will nodded and looked down at her hand, confused. Abigail looked up at him and awkwardly lowered her hand.

"And how do you know Hannibal?" Will asked. Hannibal wrapped an arm around Abigail's shoulders. Others would have viewed it as possessive, but Will could see it was different. Hannibal held her as if he were a protective shield. He looked at her the way one would look at their own kin. It was obvious that Hannibal loved Abigail. Will looked into Hannibal's eyes, and behind the layer of light and joy, he could see a deep sadness. Hannibal looked at Abigail as if she were a ghost, threatening to disappear at any moment.

"We met on my travels, much like you and I, Will." Another half-truth. Will turned once more to Abigail, her smile now fake. Her eyes darted around anxiously. He turned his attention once more to Hannibal, who seemed content with keeping his and Abigail's original meeting a mystery.

“Abigail,” Hannibal said, swiftly moving the conversation along, “would you be so kind as to find a table for myself and Will? I find myself in desperate need of a drink.” Abigail looked hesitant.

“Actually,” she began, “I don’t think you should be here, Hannibal. Word has gotten out about your betrayal of Franklyn and Tobias. I have even heard word that they are assisting the Royal Guard in its search for you—an attempt to reduce their sentence, no doubt. There is a large reward for your head, dead or alive,” she added grimly.

“I doubt anyone in this fine establishment would be so selfish as to betray one of their own,” Hannibal said. He gestured to the many members of the pub with a smile. In return, he received heated stares. Will glanced around, looking for a means of escape. This was all far too much. He wanted to see the world, not the dark and damp underbelly. Although, what if this was what Jack had warned him about in the first place? He had always told Will that there would be people out there who would want to take advantage of him, and maybe Jack was right. The men here looked at Will as if he were some mythical creature. He found it impossible to ignore their stares.

“Hannibal,” Will said in a low voice, “Perhaps it is best if we leave and make our way towards the Kingdom, I would not want any harm to come your way.”

Just as Hannibal was about to reply, a small, half naked man burst through the doors.

“It’s the Royal Guard!” he yelled in a shrill voice. “They’ve come for Lecter!” Will watched as Hannibal turned to Abigail.

“Abigail, please tell me that the crawl space is still intact.” Abigail nodded and led Hannibal to the back of the building. Will went to follow but was stopped by the young woman.

“No, there is only room for one, and they aren’t looking for you. Just keep your head down and try not to stand out.” Will nodded and stood still. He watched as Hannibal disappeared behind the mountain of people. There was a rumbling which Will felt in his bones. He looked towards the door as it was kicked down.

The room went silent. There were roughly a dozen men outside. The one who had kicked the door down made his way inside, walking slowly as if he were a predator stalking his prey.

“Where’s Lecter?”

thank you all so much for reading! comments and kudos are appreciated as always. let me know what you thought and i'll see y'all in the next one !

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Will looks for Hannibal, and Jack returns to the Kingdom.

Chapter Notes

hello all! so sorry it took me so long to update. nothing horrific happened to me, i've just been so busy with work and school. updates aren't going to be that consistent but i'll try to get more written over the next few months. anyways, enjoy!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Will huddled amongst the masses of large and sweaty men. He gripped the satchel which held Hannibal's stolen jewels. Will watched as the party entered. They were led by a man with a thick moustache. He wore a gold-plated helmet topped with feathers, which were the colour of blood. Behind him were several similarly-dressed men.

"Where's Lecter?" he bellowed. "I know he's in here somewhere; find him! Turn this place upside down if you have to!" He banged his fist on a nearby table, which caused several jugs to spill their contents.

Once the rest of the guards filed in, Will spotted two people who looked out of place. They were led by two of the guards, and their hands were tied behind their backs. One of the men looked utterly petrified by the situation. His cheeks were damp and swollen, and his eyes were bloodshot. He looked ashamed. He was larger than Will, but not in the way that the men that surrounded him were. He was round and portly. Will met his eyes. He felt what the other man felt. He felt afraid. Will felt a looming sense of danger. As if an animal were about to pounce and attack him. Will looked away from the sweaty, agitated man and analysed the one who stood beside him.

This man looked like Death itself. He had an unsettling demeanour. His eyes were lifeless yet eerily calm. He held himself as if he knew he was better than those who surrounded him. He seemed to be embarrassed to be infatuated with the man beside him. He looked and felt in control.

Will flinched when the man caught his eyes. He looked at Will like a hungry animal, and smiled. Will looked away and hid behind the men who surrounded him.

Abigail reappeared being dragged along by one of the guards.

“I found this one hiding out the back, looks like she was hiding something.” The guard held out her hands to show the man he was talking to. Her hands were covered in dust and dirt. The man who led the guards walked up to her, their height difference staggering. Will watched as Abigail tilted her head up to make eye contact.

“What were you hiding, little girl?”

Abigail remained silent, her expression hard and resilient. The man made a frustrated sound.

“Where is Hannibal Lecter! We know that this is one of his hideouts, so where is he hiding!?”

“Who’s Hannibal Lecter?” Abigail asked. She glanced around the room, quickly making eye contact with the other members of the bar. She looked at Will last as she said, “I’ve never heard of Hannibal Lecter. Have any of you?” All around him, Will watched as everyone shook their heads, echoes of “*I’ve never heard of him*” sounded throughout. Will caught on and nodded his head in agreement. The guard made a sound similar to a growl and turned towards the two men in shackles.

“You said we would find him here! You know what we do to liars,” the guard snarled.

“We said that this was *one* of Lecter’s hideouts. There are others,” the calm man said. The sweaty one who stood beside him nodded feverishly. This guard seemed convinced, and with one final look around the room, he said, “We’ll be back.” The party left and all that remained was a tense atmosphere, and dozens of eyes on Will.

Once the bar had been put back to rights, Abigail pulled Will outside and around the back of the building. She opened a hatch and lit a lantern. She handed it to Will.

“The crawl space we have leads to a series of underground tunnels. Hannibal should be waiting for you down there.” Abigail held the hatch open for him. “He knows the tunnels well, and with the Royal Guard on the lookout for him, this will be your safest form of travel.”

“Thank you, Abigail.”

“You’re welcome. Good luck.”

Will climbed down the slightly rotten wooden ladder until his feet made contact with the soft ground. The air was stale. The scent of the space was foul and assaulted Will’s nose. He covered the lower half of his face with his hand and held up the lantern.

“Hannibal?” he called. His voice echoed. There was no reply. Will huffed and called again. No answer. He could hear the Guards’ horses from above. Not wanting to be found, Will ventured into one of the dark tunnels in hopes of finding Hannibal.

When Jack arrived at the Royal gates, there was chaos. During the time it took for Jack to commute from Will's tower to the Kingdom, something had happened. The most valuable jewels were stolen in broad daylight, and the main culprit got away. The King had summoned Jack upon arrival to meet in the drawing room.

"My liege—" Jack began, but he was quickly interrupted.

"How could this have happened?!" the King yelled. "Those jewels were meant for William upon his return, and now they're gone!"

"Ah," Jack thought. "*Will's return.*"

One of the terms of Will's... *safekeeping*, was that once he was deemed well enough to enter polite society, Jack would return him to the Kingdom. Upon his return there would have been a celebration. The people of the Kingdom did not know this. They believed that Prince William was stolen, kidnapped by some enemy of the Kingdom. It was only a handful of the Royal Guard who were aware, as well as the King and Queen. However, over time, Jack had come to care for Will far more than the King and Queen ever could. While, yes, the child would make him uncomfortable from time to time, he couldn't help but feel protective of him. He was born into a world that wasn't made for him.

"Who stole them?" Jack asked. He was well aware how valuable the jewels were, and how they were irreplaceable.

"Hannibal Lecter," the King spat.

"Have we no clue where he is?" Jack knew Hannibal Lecter all too well. Once an ally, however, he had an ulterior motive.

"The Guard are out as we speak in search of him. His two co-conspirators have been captured, but have offered information in exchange for reduced sentence."

"Lecter's associates are almost never found alive, are we sure this was him?" Jack was sceptical.

"Are you doubting me, Crawford?"

"Never, Your Majesty. However, it is unnatural for Lecter to not leave a trail of bodies in his wake."

"It *was* Lecter. And you better pray that the Royal Guard find him, otherwise I'll send the Beasts."

Jack shuddered at the mention. The Beasts were less than human, yet more than animal. They were something in between. They were both the most skilled hunters the Kingdom had ever seen. One took the persona of a Bear; he was intelligent and could overpower any man. The other was a Dragon. A great dangerous beast who would snarl and bite at anyone who dared approach. He was so often covered in blood and remains of his kills that he was nicknamed

The Great Red Dragon. Both he and the Bear were kept out of sight, deep in the dungeons of the castle. They were given fresh meat to feast on, and every month they would be led out onto the grounds to hunt.

Jack knew that if the King sent the Beasts after Lecter, he would never be seen alive again. However, Jack couldn't share his views with the King, lest he lose his place in the Kingdom.

"May God have mercy on his soul," Jack said solemnly. May God have mercy on all of them, if the Beasts are set free.

Chapter End Notes

thank you all so much for reading and as always i hope you enjoyed! again i am so sorry it took me so long to update. comments are always deeply appreciated (i love hearing from y'all) and i'll see you all again in the next one!

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Reunited!

Chapter Notes

spiders in this chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Hannibal considered himself to be a skilled navigator. He knew how to orient himself to the north, how to read the stars, and how to tell his position by looking at the moon. However, all of those skills were useless when he was stuck in an underground tunnel with no light other than his lit torch.

The underground tunnels ran all over the Kingdom, going as far as the castle. They all conjoin underneath the Snuggly Duckling, as a means of escape for those on the run.

He doesn't know how he got lost. Hannibal had been in these tunnels countless times before. However, in those previous escapes, Hannibal didn't have Will on his mind. *Will*. Will, who was blunt and said whatever entered his mind. Will, whom Hannibal knew had the heart of a beast waiting to be tamed. Hannibal craved to see Will's monster, to see the creature that lived below the surface.

Hannibal sighed and slumped against the wet wall of the tunnel. He had been down there for hours, and he was no closer to finding Will. He turned 360 degrees. He was at a cross section between several more tunnels, the signs which told where they led were long gone.

Hannibal sat on the cold ground for what felt like forever, mentally retracing his steps. He would find his way out, of course he would. He was Hannibal Lecter, one of the most famous criminals the Kingdom has ever seen, and he wasn't going to be stopped by an overcomplicated tunnel system.

Hannibal awoke to the sound of someone's voice, which meant he had fallen asleep. Incredibly foolish on his part, allowing himself to fall asleep in such a strange place. Hannibal assumed the voice was in his dreams, but as he stood, he heard it again. It echoed off of the walls of the tunnel, but it was getting closer.

“Hello?” he called. The voice that replied was difficult to make out, but it didn’t sound like any of the Royal Guard.

“Hannibal?” the voice called back. It was closer now, and Hannibal recognised it immediately.

“Will? Is that you?” Hannibal heard a sound that resembled a laugh.

“Yeah, it’s me. Stay where you are, I’m coming.”

Hannibal couldn’t help but smile. Will had found him! Hannibal wiped himself clean of the muck that had accumulated on his legs while he awaited Will’s arrival. Hannibal saw the flicker of torch light and a large shadow turn a corner, and then there was Will. Somehow, in the few hours they had been apart, Will had grown impossibly more beautiful. His hair was a mess; it was covered in dust, no doubt from navigating the tunnels in search for Hannibal. Will’s shirt was damp with sweat, making it cling to his chest and back. His lips were red and Hannibal found himself unable to take his eyes off of them. It wasn’t until he saw them moving when Hannibal realised that Will was speaking to him.

“Are you okay? Abigail said that you knew your way around the tunnels, but judging by how long it took for me to find you, maybe not. Did you get lost?”
Hannibal considered lying, almost embarrassed to admit that his mind had wandered.

“It has been a long time since I have last stepped foot in these tunnels, my memory did not serve its purpose. But a better question, however, is how did you find me?”

Will broke out into a grin and crouched down to the floor. Hannibal looked down and reeled back in shock.

“They helped me,” Will whispered in awe. He was surrounded by spiders. *Hundreds* of spiders. They all varied in shape and size. Will did not seem irked by the hoards of *creepy crawlies*.

“They...helped you?” Hannibal was wary. He had heard stories of sorcerers who were able to manipulate the minds of all living things. But...Will did not seem the type. Perhaps Will was more powerful than Hannibal initially believed. Oh, how he longed to learn every minute detail about Will.

“Yeah. They saw I was lost and took me to you.” Will answered as if it were common knowledge. Hannibal must have had a confused look on his face, because Will sighed and explained.

“They can speak to me, and I can speak to them. Well, no. Speak is the wrong word. I can...” Will paused, searching for the right word, “. . . *understand* them. It’s not necessarily in *words*

but we understand each other. They could tell I was looking for someone, and they brought me here.”

“That’s...” Hannibal started.

“What? Insane. Disturbing. *Weird* ?” Will spat that last word.

“Incredible,” Hannibal said with an exhale. “You, my dear Will, are incredible.” Hannibal didn’t know when it happened, but he had found himself impossibly close to Will. They were both sat on the ground, nose to nose. The spiders had scuttled away and were nowhere to be seen. Will looked up at Hannibal with a strange look in his eye. Bewilderment. Will tilted his head at Hannibal; his gaze was analytic.

“You mean it?” Will asked, his voice no louder than a breath. Hannibal held Will’s face in his hands and brought their foreheads together.

“Lying to you now would bring me great pain, dear Will.” Will let out a sigh of relief, his warm breath tickling Hannibal’s nose.

They sat like that for some time, breathing the same air. Will ran his fingers over the bumps and scars on Hannibal’s hands, which caused him to shiver. Hannibal was no stranger to sexual pleasure, but never had he ever been this intimate with someone. What Hannibal and Will were doing was perfectly innocent. But the *closeness*, that was a luxury Hannibal had never allowed himself. Will didn’t know it yet, but Hannibal would let him know and see him in a way no one else had before.

They remained undisturbed in their little bubble of comfort for some time, until Will cleared his throat.

“We best be finding our way out of here, should we not?” he asked, standing up straight to crack his back.

“Yes, we should,” Hannibal replied, his voice rough and his accent thick. “Do you suppose that your eight legged friends could help us?”

“I am sure they can.” And, as if they were summoned by Will’s words, dozens of spiders surrounded the pair.

They followed the spiders’ path without sharing any words. They didn’t need to. Hannibal and Will were comfortable to simply exist in the same space. It was merely two hours until they emerged from the tunnels. They were led to a hatch, which, when opened, revealed the night’s sky. Hannibal helped Will out before lifting himself. Will reached his hand into the tunnel one last time to bid his friends farewell.

“How far are we from the Kingdom?” Will asked. Hannibal looked away from Will’s face (*when had he started staring to begin with?*) and lifted his head. A smile broke out over his face.

“Do you see the light over there, dear Will?” Hannibal pointed to the light, much too bright to be the moon, and far too dim to be the sun. Will nodded.

“That is the Kingdom. Less than a day’s journey from here. We’re almost there.”

Will’s body sagged with relief. He seemed to be overwhelmed with emotion.

“I can’t believe it! This is...Hannibal, I have no idea how to thank you.” Will was overjoyed. Before he knew it, Hannibal found himself wrapped up in Will’s arms. Hannibal was held tight, as if he would disappear.

“You don’t need to thank me, Will. Your company is thanks enough.” Hannibal did, however, return the act. His arms snaked around the other man’s waist and held him close. Will rested his head on Hannibal’s shoulder and let out a shaky breath. Hannibal lifted Will’s chin so that they were eye level.

“I have known many people in my life. But I have never had the pleasure of meeting someone as magnificent as you, Will.” Hannibal’s voice was no more than a whisper; Will met his eyes as if it had been yelled from the mountaintops.

“I don’t think I have ever known myself as I do when I’m with you, Hannibal.” Will spoke as if the confession had been punched out of him. Hannibal found himself unable to resist running his hand through Will’s hair. It was coarse and covered in dust, but Hannibal didn’t care. Will shuddered and placed his hand on the nape of Hannibal’s neck. The space between them was non-existent. When Hannibal breathed out, Will would breathe in. Hannibal pressed his nose to Will’s neck and inhaled. He was completely surrounded by the man. No, not a man. A *God* . If Hannibal got his way, and he always did, he would see that Will be worshipped. The fact that his beauty had been hidden from the world for so many years was an unforgivable crime.

“*Hannibal*.” Hannibal looked up to see a look of pure hunger on Will’s face. His pupils were blown wide, the white of his eyes gone.

“What is it?” Hannibal asked, his thumb stoking Will’s cheekbone.

“Don’t leave me, ever.”

“Where else would I go?” Hannibal asked. Their eyes met and it felt like fire in Hannibal’s veins. He tilted his head forward, and felt the hitch of Will’s breath. Hannibal closed his eyes and felt the brush of Will’s lips against his own. It only lasted a moment, but *oh* , it was euphoric. Heat spread across Hannibal’s body at the contact, and he vowed to himself in that moment, that if anything were to happen to Will, he would smite God to get revenge. But a moment only lasts so long. Before either could even blink, there was a blood curdling howl

that shook Hannibal to his very core. He knew that sound. It haunted his dreams. It was a Beast. Hannibal ripped himself away from Will's lips (lips that one day would be red with the blood of their enemies) and said one word.

“Run.”

Chapter End Notes

giggles and runs away

thank you all so much for reading! school has been kicking my ass but ugh i had so much fun writing this chapter. also 10K words!! comments are always appreciated <3

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

A Bear walks into a bar.

Chapter Notes

i rlly should let these guys be happy

violence in this chapter! canon similar Randell Tier scene, be warned.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The Royal Guard had returned empty handed. Lecter was nowhere to be found. His associates, Tobias and Franklyn, were to be executed within the week.

Jack was present when the Bear was set free. The Bear (a young man, born to the name Randall Tier) snarled at his handlers. The King had given strict instructions to the Guards who were to travel alongside the Bear.

“There is a chance that Lecter is not alone. If there is someone travelling alongside him, ensure that they remain unharmed. It is entirely possible that they could have been taken against their will. Keep that *thing* under control,” the King said, gesturing to the Bear at the end. There was an echo of confirmations, and the Bear was released.

Jack climbed atop his horse and set off after the party. The Bear was impossibly fast, and outran the cavalry. He had been given a shoe which previously belonged to Lecter, and his scent lingered well enough for the Bear to track him.

“*Run.*”

Will froze where he stood. That sound, that *scream*. He had heard it before. It was something eerily familiar. His eyes darted around before finally landing on Hannibal. Will wanted to run. He wanted to hold Hannibal’s hand and feel the wind run through his hair. But something was stopping him. He found himself unable to move.

“Will, my darling, we must go. There isn’t much time before he finds us,” Hannibal spoke quickly, his hand tugging Will’s.

“I...I can’t. I can’t move. I- Hannibal, I can’t move.” Will could feel his heart racing. He could hear his blood rushing throughout his body. Then he felt it. A strange tingling sensation in the back of his skull. Will spun around and stared into the darkness that surrounded them. He didn’t have time to warn Hannibal that they had been found before something jumped out at them.

Will saw a Beast. It was massive and unlike anything he had ever read about. It had the body of something that resembled a man, no larger than Will. But he wore the body of an animal. An outer skeleton. It had teeth as sharp as knives, and claws that could rip boulders from mountains. It locked eyes with Hannibal. It didn’t even take notice of Will. He knew that if he didn’t act now, Hannibal would die. His body would be wasted and Will would be alone. Again.

Will watched the Beast stalk Hannibal. It circled him, getting closer with every step. Neither of them could escape. Will refused to leave the other man, and he wasn’t going to let Hannibal get hurt. The Beast had all of its attention trained on Hannibal, which gave Will an opportunity. With shaking hands, Will picked up a large rock. His arms burned as he lifted it above his head (it was easily one of the heaviest things he had ever held) but he ignored it. He ran at the Beast as fast as he could, his legs protesting. His body slammed into its back, causing it to fall on its front. A sound of pure anger was ripped out of Will’s throat as he dropped the rock onto the Beast’s exposed neck. It sagged beneath him. Will sat atop its back as it tried to fight him off. The Beast managed to turn onto its back, face to face with Will. It snarled and snapped its jaws at Will. He ripped the skull off of its face. He wanted to *see* when it died. Will brought his fists down onto its face. All that could be heard was the wet splatter of blood as Will took his kill. *His reward*. The warmth of the Beast’s blood was a strange comfort. It wasn’t until someone was pulling Will away from it that he realised what he had done.

“Will,” Hannibal whispered. It was almost worshipful, like a devout servant at their God’s altar. Hannibal didn’t look scared. He looked at Will in awe.

“Hannibal,” he whispered back. He looked down at his hands. They were drenched in blood. He couldn’t tell whether it belonged to himself, or the Beast.

“How did it feel?” Hannibal held Will’s hands with reverence. Will swallowed, the click of his throat audible.

“It felt...intimate.”

Will was led by Hannibal to a nearby stream. There, his wounds were cleaned with soft touches and gentle caresses.

“You’ve killed before,” Will said. It wasn’t a question or an accusation. Simply a statement.

“Yes, I have. Do you think any less of me because of it?” Hannibal asked, his hands never leaving Will.

“No. Not less. You have killed, and now so have I. I believe that makes us even.”

“Do you believe that we are equals?”

“I don’t think that you want to be equals. You view me as something greater, and perhaps I am. There must be a reason that I have been hidden away from polite society, no? You look at me as if I possess all the knowledge in the world. You don’t believe in God. Why would you? Afterall, He’s done nothing but ignore you. But I won’t ignore you.”

“Do you see yourself as a God?”

“Not *a* God, Hannibal.” Will leaned in close, his lips brushing against Hannibal’s ear. “I believe that I am *your* God.”

Will watched as Hannibal processed what had just been said. There was a flash of something in Hannibal’s eyes that made Will’s legs feel weak. He then felt a hunger which he had never known before. Without a second thought, he clutched at the front of Hannibal’s shirt and their lips crashed together. It was harsh and sloppy but it was *right*. The closeness of it, the way that Hannibal reciprocated with the same level of ferocity, the way that Will felt warmth spread all across his body.

Will was aware of what kissing was, but never had he thought that it would feel *so good*. What they were doing wouldn’t even be considered a kiss by most. By the end of it they were just panting into each other’s mouths, tongues swiping against lips. Will felt Hannibal trail kisses along his jaw and down his neck.

They eventually pulled away from each other, albeit regretfully. Will pressed his nose to Hannibal’s neck and shivered. He felt strong hands rub his back. Hands that have killed. Will lifted his head and looked at his own blood covered hands. He expected to feel remorse, to feel guilt. No, he felt *righteous*.

It seemed as if the universe were out to get Will. He and Hannibal were discussing what to do with the Bear’s body, merely an hour after it had been killed, when they heard voices. Voices

the both of them recognised.

“Where has he gone?,” a powerful voice asked. Will looked up at Hannibal and dropped his half of the body. That voice. Will felt his whole body freeze up, for the second time that night.

“I don’t know, Sir. If the Bear had found Lecter, he would have returned to us by now.”

“We must find him before dawn. Lord knows what would happen if the Bear is found by the wrong people.”

Will swallowed, and he was sure the fear was visible in his eyes.

“It’s Jack,” he said just above a whisper.

They were trapped. There was nowhere to run. Will could hear the horses and men coming towards them. If he and Hannibal were to run, they would surely be noticed.

Will watched Hannibal as he was no doubt coming up with a plan of escape. There had to be a way out, a way to leave undetected. What was going to happen if not? Jack would surely be outraged at Will’s escape. Only the Lord knows what Jack would do to him.

“What do we do?” Will whispered harshly.

“There is nothing we can do, dear Will,” Hannibal replied solemnly.

“What do you mea-” Will started, but he was cut off.

“Listen carefully. I know not of what will happen to us once I am captured, but, no matter what, do not listen to the slander you will no doubt hear about me if you make it to the Kingdom. The Lord has not been kind to me, and the public have taken side with Him. You will hear awful, dreadful things. But please, Will, I want you to know, there is a reason for everything.”

“What are you talking about?” Will said, his voice bordering on a sob. He didn’t even realise he had started crying. This felt like a goodbye.

“My past is unsavoury. There is much that I long to tell you, but now is not the time.”

“Just one thing, Hannibal. Please. Tell me just one thing.” Will had found himself engulfed in Hannibal’s arms.

“Will. I...I lo-”

“Hannibal!” a voice roared. And just like that, Hannibal was ripped away from Will with the strength of God.

The Royal Guard surrounded them, their weapons all pointed towards Hannibal. He had been snatched away from Will by the scruff of his neck, and was held back by several men. Will felt naked without Hannibal by his side. No one seemed to take notice of him, all eyes on Hannibal. Jack emerged from the party, separating the men as Moses once did the Red Sea.

“Hannibal Lecter. I’ve finally caught you, after all these years. How does it feel?” Jack’s voice was cold and stony. Hannibal set his jaw and didn’t make a sound. His eyes darted over to Will, only for a fraction of a second, but Jack noticed. He turned on his heels and went pale, as if he had seen a ghost.

“Will?”

At the sound of his name, several of the men perked up and started at Will.

“Sir,” one said to Jack. “Is this the Prince?”

Will wanted to scoff. This had to be some sick joke. But Jack’s shaky nod made Will’s blood turn cold. At Jack’s confirmation, almost all of the Royal Guard fell to one knee in front of him. The only ones that didn’t were those who held Hannibal.

“You’re the lost Prince?” Hannibal asked in awe. His question was answered with a swift kick to the gut by one of the Guards.

“Will,” Jack started. “Were you taken against your will? Did this *monster* kidnap you?”

Will stared at Jack with all of the fury he could muster. He wanted to laugh. He wanted to cry. He wanted to wake up from the awful dream and find himself back in his tower, living his unfulfilling life. He wanted to bite and scream at anyone who dared approach him.

“I did,” Hannibal mumbled. All eyes once again landed on him. “I found a tower while on the run from you all, and assumed it would be empty. Upon finding Will-,” he was kicked again, “-upon finding the *Prince*, I took him with me. I would look less suspicious travelling with a partner than if I was alone.” Hannibal was lying. Why was he lying? He didn’t once look at Will as he told his story. Was this lie meant to protect Will?

“And I believe that these rightfully belong to you.” Hannibal kicked his fallen satchel towards Will. The satchel which contained the stolen jewels. The jewels which now belonged to Will.

Chapter End Notes

the eagle eyed amongst you may have noticed i added a chapter count. do with that information what you will.

Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

Will meets the very people who cast him away.

Chapter Notes

the end (for now)

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Will finally made it to the Kingdom, against his wishes. His mind left his body on the short journey. He only remembered fragments. Hannibal being kicked to the ground. Will, being lifted onto a horse. The constant bombardment of questions. It was hell. His only comfort was when Hannibal would spare a glance his way.

The Kingdom itself was beautiful. Flowers grew on every surface and animals grazed freely. Will didn't care for any of it. The party soon approached the castle. There were even more of the Royal Guard present. They all bowed as the horse which carried Will past them.

They entered a lush courtyard, and they all dismounted. Will watched in pain as Hannibal was dragged away. He was so grateful, even in a moment as low as that. He went willingly; he did not kick or scream or snarl, unlike Will thought he would. Hannibal's eerie calmness was more unnerving than any violent act he could have committed.

"I believe that I have some explaining to do," Jack said as he led Will inside of the castle. Will was sure that the walls were covered in gorgeous artwork. He ignored it all.

"Has my whole life been a lie, Jack? You- you always said that I was in that tower because it wasn't *safe* for me here. But if I really am some long lost Prince, wouldn't this castle be the safest place for me? There are dozens of men who bow whenever I come close. Are they not sworn to protect me?"

"You were a dangerous child, Will. We didn't know what you were capable of! We decided it would be best to raise you away from the Kingdom."

"Who's *we*?"

“I believe it is time you meet your parents, Will.”

Will was taken into a massive room; the walls were covered in books and tapestries. There were paintings of what he assumed were former Kings and Queens. And there were two people. A man and a woman. One was sat on a plush chair with unfinished embroidery in hand. The other stood by a large window, gazing outside. Jack cleared his throat to alert them of his presence.

“Your Majesty, Your Royal Highness.” Both strangers turned towards Jack. “Allow me to present, Prince William.”

The woman in the chair darted towards Will. She was instantly in his personal space, looking at him with an analytical stare.

“Is it really him, Jack?” she asked.

“I can assure you, ma’am.”

The woman sobbed and clung to Will. Her arms weaved around him and held him tight, tighter than anything he had ever known.

“Who are you?” he asked.

“Will, do you not recognise your own mother?” She stood back, and Will saw it. She had long brown curls which reached her waist. Her jaw was just as sharp as his, and her eyes, *her eyes*. Will felt as if he was staring at a mirror. He felt himself sink into the valleys of her mind. Her emotions were his emotions. Waves of sadness washed over him. Sadness, shame, anger. Then, he felt a hand clamp down on his shoulder.

“It’s good to finally meet you, son,” the man (presumably his father) said, voice thick with emotion. At that moment, everything that had happened over the last few days (*Hannibal, Hannibal, Hannibal*) came crashing down. His whole body shuddered with the pain he felt inside. He sobbed. He sobbed alongside his mother and father, who rightly thought he was crying for them.

“Oh, my darling,” his mother whispered, her hand petting his hair, “you’re home now. You’re safe.” But he wasn’t home. Home was in the forest. Home was in Hannibal’s arms. Home was watching the fish swim freely beneath the currents of the river. This was not home.

Hannibal was taken to a place he knew all too well. The dungeons. There were three layers of them beneath the castle. The uppermost layer held criminals who were due to be executed within the following year. Hannibal wondered if Franklyn and Tobias were there. The next was where traitors of the Kingdom were kept. Some were tortured, while others were left to rot. And the final layer was where Hannibal was to be kept.

Many citizens of the Kingdom, as well as staff within the castle, did not know of the third dungeon. Aside from Hannibal, there was only one inhabitant. One less than before his arrival.

Once the guards had deposited Hannibal into his cell (rather roughly, in his opinion) he straightened up and pressed his head against the bars. It was almost pitch black, save for the light which was emitted by a singular torch. Hannibal could not see anything else in the dungeon, but he knew he wasn't alone.

"Oh Francis," he sang. Hannibal heard a huff and the scraping of chains against the dungeon floor. *"Have you missed me, Francis?"* he taunted. Another huff came in response. *"Terribly sorry to hear about Randell, poor boy. So much wasted potential."* Hannibal heard a confused snarl. *Oh this is going to be fun.*

"Have you not heard? Well, it wouldn't surprise me if they haven't told you yet. Come close, Francis." Chains dragged along the ground and rattled as Francis came as close as possible. *"He's dead,"* Hannibal said in a stage whisper. *"I watched him die, and it was glorious, Francis. The only negative was that I wasn't the one who killed him."* Hannibal could hear Francis' heavy breathing.

"Who..." Francis started. Speech took a lot out of him, as Hannibal had noticed. *"Who... did?"* Hannibal could feel his lips being tugged into a smile at the memory.

"Our dear lost Prince, of course." Francis snared and growled violently, tugging on his chains so hard that Hannibal could hear them creak.

"No! No, no, no! Liar! You lie, you lie, you lie!" Francis yelled. The commotion must have altered some nearby guards, as several rushed into the dungeon.

"What have you done?" one commanded at Hannibal. He simply smiled.

"I was only making conversion." Hannibal sat down against the back wall of his cell, and watched in amusement as the guards attempted to subdue Francis.

Once Francis had been calmed down and the guards had left, Hannibal finally had time to be alone with his thoughts. He thought of Will. He thought of the darkness that seeped through upon their first encounter. Hannibal could tell instantly that Will was not someone who could be taken for granted. And with the new revelation of Will being the lost Prince, oh, that gave Hannibal something to look forward to.

The following hours were incredibly overwhelming for Will. Once he and his parents had calmed down, he was instantly tugged throughout the castle. He was given a quick and basic tour, showcasing all of the rooms he would soon find familiar. He was introduced to all of the essential staff; all of whom bowed down at his presence. He was then shown his chambers. The room was massive, far larger than his chamber in the tower. Books sat on shelves, waiting to be read and paints and parchment paper were laid across a large table, with brushes of incredible quality.

“Everything in here is for you, Will,” his mother said softly. “If you desire anything, alert one of the staff and you will have it.”

“I have no idea what to say,” Will said, his voice small.

“Thank you, would suffice.”

“Thank you, mother.”

His mother smiled and kissed him on the cheek.

“Get plenty of rest. Tomorrow will be a busy day.”

“What will happen tomorrow?”

“Preparations for your official homecoming, my darling. And, while I have no doubt in Jack’s teaching abilities, you will be shown how to behave like a Prince, and dress like one too. Tomorrow morning, first thing, tailors will be coming to gather your measurements.”

“Oh.”

“I know it’s a lot, my dear, but it is crucial.”

“I understand. I have one question, however.”

“Yes, Will?”

“Are there any spiders?” His mother blinked several times in confusion.

“Spiders? My god, no. Have no worry, the awful creatures will bring you no harm. Goodnight, my darling.”

“Oh. Goodnight, mother.” Will tried his best to sound sincere, but the word tasted like acid on his tongue. No matter, as his mother paid no mind and left without another word.

Two weeks (he assumed) had passed since Hannibal's capture. He managed to keep himself entertained. He would taunt Francis, but when that grew tiring, Hannibal would turn to his memories. His fond memories of Will and their time together.

One evening, after Hannibal had completed his miniscule rations for the day, he noticed a familiar scent. It had been muted by luxury soaps with notes of lavender and vanilla, but the base scent was still there. Hannibal walked up to the bars of his cell when he heard voices. Quiet murmurs just out of reach. One grew closer and closer, until it was just outside the entrance to the dungeon.

"Leave," it commanded. Hannibal smiled when he heard it. *Will*.

"Sire, I must advise against-"

"I said *leave*. If I do not return within five minutes, you may come and fetch me. For now, though, I expect you to wait over there." Hannibal heard the guard leaving his post. Light filled the entryway to the dungeon, and the light was followed by Will. Lord, was he a sight to behold.

Hannibal gazed upon Will as the wise men once gazed upon the North star, believing that he held the answer to everything. Will, bringer of light and destroyer of Beasts, here, to grant Hannibal with the privilege of his presence.

The Royal lifestyle certainly suited him as well. His hair, once a mess of curls atop his head, was now somewhat tamed and styled. Long gone was the stubble which covered his face (though Hannibal would miss how it felt against his skin). His clothes fit him like a charm, and he wore them with the confidence of a King.

Will approached his cell, and Hannibal unconsciously held his breath. He was hyper aware of his surroundings. He noticed how Francis cowered in the corner, hiding himself from Will. He noticed how Will's breath turned into clouds when he exhaled. He noticed the spiders in the dungeon make their way over to Will. He noticed everything.

"This may be the last time you see me, Hannibal."

"Oh?" Hannibal trained his expression to not show any shock or upset.

"I have heard much about you, as you warned me."

"And has the public's opinion tainted your perception of me?"

"It has...opened my eyes."

“And?”

“And,” Will began, “I believe that, should I see you again, neither of us will survive this separation.”

“Will-”

“I hope time treats you well down here. I hope that you are able to find solace in the fact that, deep down, you and I have become conjoined. You’ve left your mark on me, Hannibal. Have I left a mark on you?”

“Will, please-”

“Goodbye, Hannibal.” Will’s face was so close, *so close*, to Hannibal’s, that he could feel the warmth from his breath. The ghost of a kiss.

Hannibal sat in his cell, once more abandoned by a cruel God, once more craving a forbidden flavour. Once more, he was alone.

Chapter End Notes

and that's it (for now). i would like to thank everyone who followed along from the beginning, or those who joined in whenever. i've had so much fun writing this, but fear not! a sequel is in the works! i plan to work on a sequel and have it fully written before i post. that will also allow me to focus on my studies. i'll turn this work in to a series, so be sure to bookmark/subscribe to it so you're notified when i post the sequel.

this is my first multichapter fic and it's really helped me with pacing and writing (in my opinion anyways). i will still post one shots from time to time as i tend to do, so any one who actually enjoys my works won't starve. check out some of the other stuff i've written, i'm quite proud of some of it. again, massive thank you to everyone who commented on this fic, your words mean the world <3

End Notes

thank you so much for reading! i hope you enjoyed reading this as much as i enjoyed writing it. there is much more to come so stay tuned! i don't have an upload schedule but i have big plans for this fic. please leave a comment to let me know if there's any mistakes/tags needing added/ or if you wanna share your thoughts on this fic. have a great day!

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